

Methods

Study Area

This study encompasses all commercial fishing landings that occurred along the coast of North Carolina (Figure 1). All water bodies, as defined by the NCDMF Trip Ticket Program, were used for analysis. These water bodies include those waters that make up the Albemarle-Pamlico estuarine system, all of the inshore waters in the southern part of the state, and the Atlantic Ocean.

Data and Analysis

Data for this project came from the NCDMF Trip Ticket Program, and the NCDMF License Program. Data from the NCDMF Trip Ticket Program include commercial fishing landings, ex-vessel value, and trips by species and county. The number of licenses issued to fishermen that allow the sale of catch was obtained from the NCDMF Licenses Program. The endorsements to sell, standard commercial fishing licenses (SCFL), retired standard commercial fishing licenses (RSCFL), shellfish licenses, menhaden licenses and land or sell licenses were used to determine the number of fishermen, and vessels by place of residence.

All landings data are reported as pounds or value (in U.S. dollars). Pounds are reported as whole weights. Values are reported as the ex-vessel value (dockside value) and were obtained by monthly surveys of dealers voluntarily supplying price information. Both current and deflated values are reported. The current value reflects the ex-vessel value for a particular year. The deflated value accounts for changes in inflation over the years by deflating the current value back to a base year according to the Consumer Price Index, which measures inflation. In this study, deflated values are calculated using 1972 as the base year, because this is when the NCDMF began recording landings data. Therefore, a value of \$100 in 2002 has a deflated value of \$23.24 in 1972 dollars. All percentages reported for values are determined using the current value.